

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /031 W

----- 067458

O 011720Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2760

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 RABAT 3640

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MO SP SS

SUBJ: SPANISH SAHARA: FON MIN LARAKI'S VISIT TO
WASHINGTON, AUGUST 6

REF: RABAT 3497

1. REFTEL PRESENTED A BROAD ANALYSIS OF MOROCCAN PERCEPTIONS AND INTENTIONS WITH REGARD TO SPANISH SAHARA AS WELL AS MY ASSESSMENT OF US INTERESTS. THE PRESENT MESSAGE CONTAINS BOTH GENERAL THOUGHTS AND SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HANDLING LARAKI'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON.

2. THERE APPEARS TO BE COMPLETE AGREEMENT BETWEEN DEPARTMENT AND MISSION REGARDING OUR PRESENT STANCE OF NEUTRALITY AND NON-INTERVENTION IN REFERENCE TO MOROCCO'S SAHARAN CLAIMS. AT THE SAME TIME I HOPE THAT OUR RESPONSE TO LARAKI WILL AVOID GIVING THE IMPRESSION WE ARE SLAMMING THE DOOR IN THEIR FACE; WE SHOULD SEEK TO REMIND MOROCCANS OF THE IMPORTANT AND ENDURING INTERESTS THEY HAVE IN RETAINING GOOD RELATIONS WITH UNITED STATES. WHILE THE MOROCCANS MAY INDICATE SOME DISAPPOINTMENT WITH OUR UNWILLINGNESS TO WEIGH IN ON THIS ISSUE, IT WILL HARDLY COME AS A SURPRISE TO THEM AS IT IS CONSISTENT WITH THE ATTITUDE WE HAVE TAKEN HERE ALL ALONG AND IS BASICALLY NOT DIFFERENT FROM THE

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MESSAGES THEIR EMISSARIES ARE RECEIVING ELSE-

WHERE, EVEN IN "BROTHERLY" ARAB LANDS.

3. AS ELABORATED REFTEL SAHARA ISSUE HAS TWO
MAJOR ASPECTS:

A. SPANISH-MOROCCAN

B. INTER-ARAB (MOROCCO-MAURITANIA-ALGERIA)

I SUGGEST SECRETARY AND THE DEPUTY SECRETARY SHOW
"SYMPATHETIC UNDERSTANDING" OF MOROCCAN VIEWPOINT
BUT IF PRESSED FOR US GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION
WITH SPAIN, THEY MAY WISH TO SUGGEST THAT OTHER
COUNTRIES, SPECIFICALLY ARAB, BETTER SUITED FOR THIS
ROLE IN VIEW LONG STANDING GOOD ARAB-SPANISH RELA-
TIONSHIP. I FURTHER SUGGEST WE INDICATE OUR CON-
TINUED CONCERN WITH THE SITUATION IN LINE OUR
OVERALL ENDEAVOR FOR PEACE AND STABILITY IN AREA
AND THAT WE WOULD KEEP OUR POSITION UNDER REVIEW
AS THE SITUATION EVOLVES. I DO NOT BELIEVE IT
WILL BE NECESSARY TO STATE OUR UNWILLINGNESS TO
INTERVENE IN STRONGER TERMS AS THE MOROCCANS
ARE QUITE USED TO SUBTLETIES.

4. I ASSUME THAT SECRETARY AND DEPUTY SECRETARY
WILL WISH TO EXPRESS TRADITIONAL AMERICAN HOPE
FOR THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES BETWEEN
THE PARTIES PRIMARILY CONCERNED AND IN THIS CONNEC-
TION MAY WISH TO MENTION OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT
SOME DIRECT BILATERAL CONTACTS ON THIS ISSUE
HAVE BEGUN BETWEEN GOM AND GOS WHICH HOPEFULLY MAY
CONTRIBUTE TO THE ABOVE END.

5. I FURTHERMORE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT SECRETARY
PUT HIS SPECIFIC RESPONSE ON SAHARA INTO CONTEXT
OF THE BROADER FRAMEWORK OF OUR EVOLVING ROLE AND
INTERESTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. I SENSE A NEED AT
THIS STAGE FOR A REAFFIRMATION OF THE KIND OF CON-
CEPTUAL LEADERSHIP THE SECRETARY PROVIDED DURING
HIS RABAT VISIT. THIS REAFFIRMATION WILL SERVE
AS A USEFUL AND NEEDED REMINDER OF OUR UNDERLYING
PURPOSES AND EFFORTS TO THE TOP MOROCCANS AS
WELL AS TO THOSE MOROCCANS AND AMERICANS CURRENTLY
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ENGAGED IN CONSTRUCTING THE DETAILED FABRIC OF
OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS. IT WILL BE USEFUL TO
REITERATE THAT DESPITE U.S. NEUTRALITY OVER THE
SAHARA, OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WITH MOROCCO
IS BASED EVER INCREASINGLY ON SHARED PERCEPTIONS
OF THE NEED FOR PEACE, STABILITY AND PROGRESS IN
THE MIDDLE EAST. IN THIS QUEST FOR PEACE AMERICA
IS WILLING AND DETERMINED TO PLAY A KEY ROLE;

THIS FACT SHOULD IN THE LONG RUN BE CRUCIAL TO ANY MOROCCAN ASSESSMENT OF ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES. (LIKEWISE, OUR OWN ASSESSMENT OF MOROCCO'S CURRENT EFFORT TO TWIST THE SPANISH TAIL SHOULD BE TEMPERED BY RECOGNITION THAT CONTINUED UNDERSTANDING, GOOD WILL AND COOPERATION OF AN ARAB COUNTRY HISTORICALLY FRIENDLY TO THE UNITED STATES CAN BE AN IMPORTANT ASSET IN OUR EFFORTS TO SECURE MIDDLE EAST PEACE.)

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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2761

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 RABAT 3640

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6. I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER LARAKI WILL WISH TO RAISE OTHER BILATERAL ISSUES WITH SECRETARY OR DEPUTY SECRETARY. IF, HOWEVER, US-MOROCCAN MILITARY SUPPLY PROBLEM WERE TO BE BROUGHT UP BY LARAKI THE FOLLOWING SUMMARY OR PARTS THEREOF ARE SUGGESTED: KING HASSAN EXPRESSED DESIRE TO SECRETARY AND THE THEN ASSISTANT SECRETARY NEWSOM FOR RE-EQUIPPING MOROCCAN ARMY WITH US MATERIEL AND UNDER US AUSPICES. MILITARY MISSION UNDER BRIGADIER GENERAL PARTAIN SUBSEQUENTLY SENT TO MOROCCO PRODUCED A REPORT WHICH SPELLED OUT MOROCCAN REQUIREMENTS. AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME US GOVERNMENT SHIFTED FROM DIRECT FMS CREDITS TO CREDIT GUARANTEES IN ORDER TO MEET ITS COMMITMENTS. THIS HIT PARTICULARLY HARD THOSE COUNTRIES LIKE MOROCCO WHICH WISHED TO EXPAND ITS EQUIPMENT AT THAT TIME BECAUSE THE PRIME RATE OF COMMERCIAL CREDIT WENT STEEPLY UP. THIS NEW METHOD OF MILITARY FINANCING

WAS PERHAPS NOT FULLY UNDERSTOOD ON BOTH SIDES AND
HENCE FINANCIAL NEGOTIATIONS WERE STRETCHED OUT TOO
LONG FOR COMMERCIAL CREDITS TO BE OBTAINED BEFORE
FMS CREDITS EXPIRED. IN ORDER TO SAVE SITUATION
A LAST MINUTE SHIFT OCCURRED FROM CREDIT GUARANTEES
(12 MILLION) TO DIRECT FMS CREDIT (3 MILLION). THIS
WAS HOWEVER A TECHNICAL STEP AND IN NO WAY INDICATES
LESSENED US COMMITMENT TO THE PROGRAM. IN THE
MEANTIME THE MILITARY SUPPLY SITUATION HAD BECOME
SO TIGHT (SECRETARY OR DEPUTY SECRETARY CAN SPELL
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THIS OUT MUCH BETTER THAN WE CAN) THAT THE FIRST
PORTION OF OUR SUPPLIES HAS TO BE TAKEN OUT OF
OPERATING US UNITS. THE WORD "IMPACT PACKAGE"
USED IN PAST MESSAGES SHOULD BE AVOIDED AT ALL TIMES
WHEN TALKING WITH MOROCCANS. WE SHALL BE AS FORTH-
COMING AS POSSIBLE ON FUTURE MOROCCAN REQUIREMENTS
WHICH ARE PRESENTLY BEING SPELLED OUT BUT UNFORTUNATELY
THE TIGHT SUPPLY LINE WILL REMAIN DIFFICULT FOR SOME
TIME TO COME AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON FMS CREDITS
ARE DIFFICULT TO PREDICT AT THIS PRESENT TIME.
WE ARE HOWEVER VERY PLEASED OVER THE VERY CLOSE
WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR RESPECTIVE STAFFS
AND TOGETHER WE SHALL CONTINUE TO WORK OUT THE
BEST SOLUTIONS POSSIBLE. (PLEASE NOTE MOROCCANS
WILLING TO FINANCE THEIR REQUIREMENT THEMSELVES IF
OTHER METHODS NOT AVAILABLE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SELFDETERMINATION, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, TERRITORIAL CLAIMS, POLITICAL PARTIES, MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 AUG 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: boyleja
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974RABAT03640
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740209-1199
From: RABAT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740882/aaaacskv.tel
Line Count: 202
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: RABAT 3497
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: boyleja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 AUG 2002 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <24 FEB 2003 by boyleja>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SPANISH SAHARA: FON MIN LARAKI'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON, AUGUST 6
TAGS: PFOR, MO, SP, SS, (LARAKI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005